

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

REDEVELOPMENT BOARD

The Arlington Redevelopment Board (ARB) is the Town's Planning Board, under G.L. c. 41, § 81. There are five members of the board: four are appointed by the Town Manager and the fifth is a gubernatorial designee appointed by the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development.

The Board serves as the Town's special permit granting authority for projects, which require an Environmental Design Review per the Town's Zoning Bylaw; 10 applications were approved by the Board in 2021 and one remains under review.

The Board completed three signage reviews that began in 2020. The ARB approved the Town Yard facilities on Grove Street, one mixed-use building that will include two affordable rental homes on Mass Ave and Medford Streets, one reconstructed bank building in Arlington Heights, one new business on Mill Street, and three signs for businesses on Mass Ave and on Broadway. The Board began hearings for a proposed office building and a mixed-use building – both applications were withdrawn without prejudice. The Board also began review of a new bank in Arlington Center; the public hearings have been continued and will resume in 2022. All public hearings were completed virtually as required by social distancing guidelines resulting from the pandemic.

- The Board, via, and in partnership with DPCD, oversaw significant renovations continued to the Central School where the new Community Center will occupy the ground and first floors of the building. Renovations to a second-floor office suite allowed the Department of Health and Human Services to move from the ground floor to that space.
- Completed the Economic Analysis of Industrial Zoning Districts which led to a rewrite of allowable uses which were adopted at Annual Town Meeting. The Industrial Zoning District now allows artist live-work spaces, flex spaces, light industrial uses, food production, breweries, and vertical farming among others with development and design standards that aim to enhance the district's connection with and improve development along the Mill Brook.
- Advanced numerous Zoning Bylaw amendments including allowing for: parking reductions in all Business zoning Districts; by-right accessory dwellings in single-family, two-family homes, and accessory buildings in any Residential and Business Zoning District; marijuana delivery services in the B4

and Industrial Zoning Districts, and allowing for more energy-efficient homes to be built in lower-density residential zoning districts.

- Participated in a range of Town committees and initiatives that advanced community planning goals, including the Arlington Economic Development Recovery Task Force, Master Plan Implementation Committee, Zoning Bylaw Working Group, Arlington Heights Neighborhood Action Plan Implementation Committee, Envision Arlington Standing Committee and Advisory Committee, Open Space Committee, Housing Plan Implementation Committee, and Community Preservation Act Committee.

The ARB is also the Town's Urban Renewal Authority under G.L. c. 121; with Town Meeting approval, the Board may hold land or buildings to improve and rehabilitate them to meet community development goals. The ARB currently manages three properties: the Central School at 20 Academy Street, 23 Maple Street, and the Jefferson Cutter House at 611 Massachusetts Avenue, which includes Whittemore Park. Building tenants include the Senior Center, Mystic River Watershed Association, Arlington Chamber of Commerce, Arlington Center for the Arts, Dallin Museum, and Town departments.

Lastly, the ARB serves as the Board of Survey with authority to approve the design of roads for the purposes of ensuring that new building lots can meet zoning frontage and access requirements. There were no Board of Survey applications for consideration in 2021.

Construction began on the Senior Center (Community Center) in spring 2020 and progressed even with the limitations of the pandemic. When completed in 2022, the modern, expanded space on the ground and first floors will be dedicated to the Council on Aging, Arlington Senior Association, and community events and activities; the major building systems will be improved, including HVAC, electrical, restrooms, and the building exterior; and Health and Human Services Department, including Veterans' Services from Town Hall, will be relocated to renovated space on the 2nd floor. The building will also become fully accessible and compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Four projects were completed in 2021 advanced Arlington's Master Plan. These projects include the completion of the Economic Analysis of Industrial Zoning Districts; Connect Arlington, the Town's Sustainable Transportation Plan; the Net Zero Action Plan; and the Fair Housing Action Plan. The Economic Analysis of Industrial Zoning Districts resulted in proposed zoning amendments to modernize the industrial zoning district and create opportunities for redevelopment in these areas that include modern uses and sustainabil-

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

ity measures. These amendments were submitted for consideration and subsequently approved by 2021 Annual Town Meeting. Connect Arlington provides a vision for the development of Arlington's transportation system over the next 20 years. The Net Zero Action Plan guides Arlington toward achieving net zero greenhouse gas pollution by the year 2050; a recommendation of the plan to allow reconstruction of the foundations of homes on nonconforming lots provided the new construction reaches energy efficiency standards was approved by 2021 Annual Town Meeting. The Fair Housing Action Plan addresses equitable access to housing choice in Arlington and describes concrete actions the Town can take to eliminate housing discrimination and segregation.

The Arlington Master Plan was developed from 2013-2015, adopted by the Redevelopment Board, and endorsed overwhelmingly by Arlington Town Meeting in 2015. The Master Plan Implementation Committee (MPIC) works with the Redevelopment Board and the Department of Planning and Community Development to advance the plan. The MPIC has working and task groups aimed at implementing specific plan elements, including historic and cultural resources and land use and zoning amendments. To continue to achieve Master Plan goals in the upcoming year, the Board:

- Review progress on implementation of the Master Plan and consider new working groups, including a group to advance economic development goals and objectives.
- Develop Zoning Bylaw amendments that encourage development and redevelopment opportunities to generate a full range of housing options for all incomes and housing types and encourage mixed-use development, and new commercial development. This will include updates to Zoning Districts, map amendments, dimensional regulations and use regulation updates, exploration of Form-Based codes, and updates to the Design Standards for Commercial Areas. The Board will also be considering zoning amendments to comply with the new M.G.L. 40A MBTA Communities requirement in order to access state infrastructure funding to support redevelopment and neighborhood projects.
- Participate in a Town Information Technology project to ensure a transparent, welcoming, and efficient permit review and delivery system.
- The Board will be exploring transitioning ARB property management back to the Town.
- Develop urban renewal plan options for Arlington Center and at site-specific locations

along Arlington's main commercial corridors.

- Participate in a range of Town committees and initiatives that advance community planning goals including the: Arlington Heights Neighborhood Action Plan; Envision Arlington; Open Space Committee, Housing Plan Implementation; Community Preservation Act Committee, Master Plan Implementation Committee, Remote Participation Committee, and others on an ongoing basis.

In 2021, David Watson, the Board's Gubernatorial Designee, ended his second term. Stephen Revilak was appointed the Gubernatorial Designee by Governor Baker via the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development. Katherine Levine-Einstein ended her term and Melisa Tintocalis was appointed to the ARB by the Select Board.

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Arlington Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD) oversees planning and community development activities within the town and is committed to improving the quality of life in Arlington by improving housing opportunities, transportation access, and economic development to enhance the vitality of our business districts, and preserving and promoting our community's natural, historic, and cultural resources. The Department oversees many key town-wide initiatives and implements of long-range plans for the community. The Department administers the Town's federal Community Development Block Grant Program and has done so since the program's inception in 1974. The Department also provides staff support to many Town boards, commissions, and committees, including the Arlington Redevelopment Board (ARB), the Town's Planning Board and redevelopment authority. The ARB manages three Town buildings with assistance from Town departments: Jefferson Cutter House with Whittemore Park, Community Center building at 27 Maple Street, and 23 Maple Street.



DPCD staff L to R: Dan Amstutz, Senior Transportation Planner; Mallory Sullivan, CDBG Administrator; Jennifer Raitt, DPCD Director; Kelly Lynema, DPCD Asst. Director; Ali Carter, Economic Development Coordinator; and Ken Pruitt, Energy Manager through October 2021.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Department staff serve as liaison to the following thirty-five committees: ABC Tri-Community Flooding Group (Arlington, Belmont, Cambridge), Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board, Bicycle Advisory Committee, CDBG Subcommittee, Clean Energy Future Committee, Commission for Arts & Culture (ACAC) (includes Arlington Cultural Council and Arlington Public Art), Conservation Commission, Design Review Working Group, Economic Development Recovery Task Force, Envision Arlington Committee (Task Groups include: Business, Communication, Community & Citizen Service, Culture & Recreation, Diversity, Education, Environment, Fiscal Resources, and Governance, which include the following Reservoir Committee, Spy Pond Committee, and Sustainable Arlington), Heights Neighborhood Action Plan Implementation Committee, Housing Plan Implementation Committee, Mass Ave/Appleton Street Design Review Committee, Master Plan Implementation Committee (Active working groups include Zoning Bylaw Working Group and Historic and Cultural Resources Working Group), Open Space Committee, Parking Advisory Committee, Redevelopment Board, Transportation Advisory Committee, and Zoning Board of Appeals.

Department staff also represent the Town on eleven regional bodies: the Battle Road Scenic Byway; Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO); the North Suburban HOME Consortium; the Somerville-Arlington Continuum of Care; the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (Council, Executive Committee, and MetroCommon 2050 External Advisory Committee); Metropolitan Mayors Coalition's Climate Preparedness Taskforce and Regional Housing Partnership; Mystic River Watershed Association Resilient Mystic Collaborative; and the Charles River Watershed Association Climate Compact.

The Department administers the Town's participation in the Commonwealth's Green Communities Act Program, which includes grants for energy efficiency totaling more than \$1.875 million since 2010.

The Department reviewed and approved 13 sign permits; reviewed and provided memos to the Zoning Board of Appeals on 34 dockets and coordinated reviews and decisions for two Comprehensive Permit Applications; and reviewed and provided memos to the Select Board on 12 license applications and 37 Small Cell Wireless facilities. Economic Development staff worked with relevant departments, boards, and local business owners to set up four public parklets and one public sidewalk seating area. In addition to the public parklets, the Town licensed 11 private parklets and outdoor seating areas to local restaurants through the Temporary Outdoor Dining License (TODL) process. This is also in addition to the nine sidewalk café permits that the Town issues annually. Pre-pandemic, the Town only issued ten sidewalk café permits annually, but with the

installation of public parklets and through the COVID-responsive TODL process, the number has grown to 25.

The Department welcomed David Morgan as Environmental Planner/ Conservation Agent. Kelly Lynema, AICP, was promoted to Assistant Director. The Department thanks departing colleagues Erin Zwirko, AICP, who served as Assistant Director, Emily Sullivan, AICP, who served as Environmental Planner/ Conservation Agent, and Ken Pruitt, who served as Energy and Project Manager, for their service and many contributions to making the Department and the town a better place. At the close of 2021, the Department hired a new Senior Planner and Sustainability Manager set to begin work in early 2022. The Department also wishes to thank Meghan Mei, intern from Arlington High School, for her assistance with energy and economic development programs.



Climate Futures event at Fox Library with Dr. Elizabeth Homen, APS Superintendent, speaking to students.

2021 Highlights

Economic Development

2021 was a busy year for economic development projects and initiatives in town. In April of 2021 the Arlington Economic Development Recovery Task Force collected data from the community via the second Arlington Consumer Survey conducted during the pandemic. In the survey, which had 756 responses, 77% of respondents said that they would like the increase in outdoor dining options for restaurants to remain permanent. 77% reported that parklets and other public outdoor amenities made them either more likely (46%), or much more likely (31%) to shop at Arlington businesses. With clear public support for outdoor dining and increased interest from business owners, programs were adopted to allow businesses to pivot and thrive in a new context. Pop-ups became a more prominent feature of the town's retail landscape, with three coordinated by the Town on its own property and several others arising in Arlington Center and Arlington Heights. To normalize the process of expanding outdoor dining and retail operations for local businesses, the Select Board voted at the recommendation of the Economic Development Re-

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

covery Task Force to create a new Outdoor Restaurant and Retail Permit application process, which fuses the pandemic Temporary Outdoor Dining License program and the pre-pandemic Sidewalk Café Permit program, making it faster and easier than ever for businesses to establish outdoor operations.

Aside from COVID-19-related work the Town's economic development staff received three technical assistance grants and one placemaking grant to support outdoor businesses. Technical assistance support was granted through the state's Local Rapid Response Program, which culminated in a tri-town plan for Arlington Heights, East Lexington, and Bedford Center to leverage their proximity to the Minuteman Bikeway to support their small businesses. Technical Assistance through the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) was received through the Arts Indicators project, intended to measure the economic impact of arts and culture initiatives in the community as well as through a technical assistance study of tourism impacts in collaboration with Lexington and Concord. Economic development staff also received the designation from the Federal Highway Administration for Federal Scenic Byway Status for the Battle Road Scenic Byway, achieving the agency's highest designation as an All-American Road, one of 57 in the United States and the only All-American Road in New England. A MassDOT Shared Streets and Spaces grant funded the purchase of \$50,000 worth of equipment for an accessible parklet platform, LED umbrellas, and landscaping improvements to the parklet on Medford Street. The team completed Phase I of the Whittemore Park project in the fall of 2021. The design of Phase II was finalized as well, and construction will begin in the spring of 2022. The Town's Economic Development Coordinator also became an AICP certified planner in 2021.



Medford Street parklet

Transportation Initiatives

There were many critical transportation projects and initiatives completed or undertaken by DPCD in 2021. Of note was the completion of Connect Arlington, the Town's Sustainable Transportation Plan, which was endorsed by the Select Board on July 19, 2021. DPCD

has also played a key role in the administration of the Mass Ave/Appleton Design Review Committee and the subsequent development of short-term improvements to the intersection of Mass Ave, Appleton Street, and Appleton Place, which was implemented in November 2021. Work on trails and shared-use paths took a central role with the kick-off of the Minuteman Bikeway Planning Project in the fall and the award to the Town of MassTrails funds to develop a feasibility study to connect the Mystic River Path to the Minuteman Bikeway via the Mystic Valley Parkway and Summer Street. The Department continues to oversee the development and expansion of the Bluebikes regional bike share system in Arlington as well. DPCD has been involved in planning for other significant transportation projects in Arlington, including working with the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) to develop recommended improvements to Chestnut Street (approved by the Select Board on June 21, 2021), working with MassDOT and their design consultant on the state-funded Safe Routes to School project for the Stratton Elementary area, and working with the MBTA on their proposals to make changes to bus stops in Arlington Heights and on Pleasant Street. Besides TAC, DPCD also works on transportation issues with the Bicycle Advisory Committee (ABAC), Parking Advisory Committee (PAC), and the Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).



Connect Arlington Sustainable Transportation Plan cover, July 2021.

Connect Arlington, the Sustainable Transportation Plan

With the assistance of the Sustainable Transportation Plan Advisory Committee and the Town's consultant Nelson/Nygaard, DPCD completed Connect Arlington, the Town's Sustainable Transportation Plan. Connect Arlington supplants the Traffic and Circulation section of the Arlington Master Plan with a more robust and detailed explanation of existing transportation conditions and goals and strategies for the transportation system in Arlington. The plan provides a vision for the development of the transportation system in Arlington over the next 20 years (2021-2041). Goals and recommendations were developed to prioritize next steps for projects, programs, and policies to achieve this vision.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Connect Arlington focuses on all aspects of transportation and mobility in Arlington, including walking, bicycling, public transportation, driving, shared mobility, and micro-mobility to ensure that residents, workers, business owners, and visitors are provided a safe, reliable, multimodal transportation network that meets the needs of all people of all ages and abilities. The plan emphasizes that the ability for a community's transportation system to move people and goods effectively, efficiently, and equitably is fundamental to quality of life, economic opportunity, and sustainability. Funding for this project was approved at the 2019 Annual Town Meeting.

The Strategies & Implementation section of the plan explains how the Town should meet the goals and vision of the plan and is broken into several categories covering themes such as safety, mobility, pedestrian and bicycle access, public transportation, and support for economic development. DPCD is already working to implement the strategies in the plan, which include: completing the Minuteman Bikeway Planning Project; conducting a feasibility study for a trail connection between the Mystic River Path and the Minuteman Bikeway; working on projects that improve bicycle and pedestrian safety and connections by redesigning streets and intersections; developing and working on Safe Routes to Schools projects for Stratton and Dallin Elementary; and working with the MBTA on public transportation projects.



Short-term improvements at Mass Ave and Appleton, November 2021.

Mass Ave/Appleton Street

After the death of Charlie Proctor at the intersection of Mass Ave and Appleton Street/Appleton Place in May 2020, who was riding his bicycle when he was struck by a left-turning driver at the intersection, the Select Board approved the creation of the Mass Ave/Appleton Design Review Committee. The Committee began meeting in earnest in early 2021 and held five meetings throughout the year to provide guidance on short-term improvements at the intersection and consider longer-term improvements to the wider corridor including the intersections of Mass Ave and Lowell Street and Mass Ave at Forest Street/Burton Street. DPCD organized and administered the committee meetings

and worked with the Town's transportation consultant, Green International, to develop short-term concepts for review by the Committee. A short-term improvement plan was recommended by the Committee to the Select Board, which was modified to combine two possible alternatives and approved by the Board in October 2021. Short-term improvements were installed in November 2021, which included bike lanes, new signage, new pavement markings, change of traffic flow on Appleton Place, and some new parking restrictions. A flashing pedestrian warning beacon at Mass Ave and Forest Street/Burton Street and speed feedback signs along the corridor are also planned. In 2022 the Town expects to contract with a consultant to begin work on the longer-term design to remake the corridor for the safety and accessibility of all transportation modes.

Minuteman Bikeway Planning Project

DPCD received \$80,000 in funding from the Community Preservation Act (CPA) to conduct the Minuteman Bikeway Planning Project, which will identify opportunities to improve safety, comfort, access, and user experience throughout the Minuteman Bikeway in Arlington; develop an action plan for pursuing site-specific improvements; and develop programmatic strategies for the ongoing success of the Bikeway facility. The Town hired Kittelson & Associates to develop the plan. In Fall 2021 a public meeting was held, alongside a public survey which garnered over 1,600 responses. Kittelson & Associates is finalizing their review of the existing conditions of the Bikeway, and is now developing policy, corridor-wide, and site-specific recommendations with

the intention of finalizing the action plan in early 2022.



Proposed route for Mystic River Path to Minuteman Bikeway Trail.

Mystic River Path to Minuteman Bikeway Feasibility Study

Arlington received a 2021 MassTrails grant of \$80,000 to conduct a feasibility study on creating a safe and accessible trail connection between the Mystic River Path and the Minuteman Bikeway via the Mystic Valley Parkway and Summer Street in Arlington. In addition, the Lawrence and Lillian Solomon Foundation has contributed \$10,000 to assist with the funding match for the grant. The Town has hired Toole Design Group to conduct the study and perform the public engagement on this project through a series of public surveys and

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

meetings. DPCD is partnering with the Mystic River Watershed Association to oversee the project development and assist with the public engagement. The project is underway and will be wrapped up by the end of June 2022.

Public Transportation/ MBTA Initiatives

DPCD works closely with the MBTA to identify bus priority projects and make bus stop improvements around Arlington. Town staff continue to monitor the Mass Ave bus lane that operates in the parking lane on the eastbound section of Mass Ave between Varnum Street and Alewife Brook Parkway that was installed in fall 2019. This bus lane serves MBTA routes #77, #79, and #350 and operates Monday through Friday, 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. The Town continues to learn how to manage, operate, and maintain the many elements of the dedicated lane, which is instructive for future bus priority improvements around the town.

Adjustments were made to bus stops on Pleasant Street to improve ADA-accessibility and improve bus service with changes to bus stop spacing and locations. DPCD assisted with the public engagement process to ensure that abutters were notified and had the opportunity to comment on the MBTA's proposal. The Select Board approved these changes to the Pleasant Street stops in spring 2021. DPCD is now working with the MBTA on a similar proposal to make accessibility improvements and adjust the stop network on Park Ave and Wachusett Ave in Arlington Heights. This work will continue in 2022.

Town staff have been engaged with the MBTA on future bus priority projects in Arlington and with the Bus Network Redesign process underway with the MBTA and MassDOT. The MBTA expects to release its proposed network of new high-frequency bus routes in early 2022.



Hosting bus priority lane event with DPCD staff and regional leaders.

Bike Share

The Town became part of the Bluebikes regional bike share program in fall 2020. The program operated throughout 2021 with six bike share stations distributed in Arlington Center and East Arlington. Funding for the start-up of this program was provided by the MassDOT Workforce Transportation Grant and an appropriation from Town Meeting to match the grant funds. DPCD continues to monitor and oversee the program, participating in frequent check-ins with the program's operator, Lyft, and the other communities in the region that are part of the program.

Arlington continues to be one of the most successful expansion communities based on trips taken. Just under 10,000 Bluebikes trips were taken in Arlington in 2021, with the stations at the Railroad Lot and the Minuteman Bikeway and Linwood Street at the Minuteman Bikeway being the most popular. August and September also had the highest number of trips out of the year. The Bluebikes program in the region has a whole saw significant gains in 2021, with daily trips surpassing previous records and total usage well above pre-pandemic levels.

More Bluebikes stations are planned for installation in 2022. The Town has received Community Connections Grant funding from the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization that will be used to purchase and install new stations. The Town is also considering additional grant opportunities and long-term local funding for the program. New stations are expected to expand the program further west towards Arlington Heights, as this continues to be a desire of the Town and of public feedback received on the program.

Safe Routes to School

The Town supports safe walking and bicycling for children to reach their schools to increase their daily physical activity; reduce traffic congestion around schools during drop-off and pick-up times; reduce environmental pollution from vehicle emissions; and promote traffic safety for all street users. DPCD works with the Transportation Advisory Committee, the Massachusetts Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program, and other Town departments to ensure that all schools have safe and accessible routes for children to walk and bicycle to school year-round.

This fall saw significant activity to develop the SRTS Infrastructure Project for the Stratton school area, which will provide a fully accessible walking route with safe roadway crossings for children and others walking to Stratton Elementary School along Hemlock Street between Brattle Street and Dickson Avenue and Dickson Avenue between Hemlock Street and Pleasant Avenue. DPCD worked with MassDOT and the Pare Corporation, MassDOT's design consultant, to hold a public meeting in fall 2021 to take comments on the

preliminary design for the project. This informed significant adjustments for the 25% design submission that was provided to MassDOT in December. A design public hearing is expected for spring 2022 to review the 25% design submission. This project is funded through a grant award received by Arlington in March 2019. The current estimated project cost, of which the design and construction are fully funded through MassDOT, is \$1,072,752. Funding for this project is programmed in Federal Fiscal Year 2024, with construction expected to begin in calendar year 2024.

DPCD staff have also been engaged with the Dallin School to implement recommendations from their Massachusetts SRTS arrival/dismissal audit, in partnership with TAC. This included a public meeting in August 2021 to review the proposed changes to the arrival/dismissal plan and take questions and comments. Staff will continue to work with Dallin School in 2022 to help pilot their project.

Complete Streets

A strategy recommendation from Connect Arlington is to review and update the Complete Streets Policy and Complete Streets Prioritization Plan. Many of the projects on the Prioritization Plan, which was approved by MassDOT in summer 2016, have been completed or are being addressed through other projects. The Massachusetts Complete Streets program has also been updated with new guidance and funding policy. DPCD expects to work with TAC and other Town Departments to update the policy and plan in 2022, particularly to add key projects such as safety on Chestnut Street and the Mass Ave/Appleton Street area to ensure these projects are eligible for funding through the state program.

Boston MPO

In 2021 Arlington was re-elected as a member of the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), with DPCD staff attending MPO meetings representing the current Chair of the Select Board, Steve DeCoursey. The Boston MPO is responsible for conducting the federally required metropolitan transportation planning process for the Boston metropolitan area. The planning process is necessary to develop a vision for transportation in the region and to decide how to allocate federal and state transportation funds to transportation programs and projects that improve roadway, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian infrastructure. In 2021 the MPO approved a new Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which is updated annually; began preliminary work on the update to the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), Destination 2050; convened an ad hoc committee to review policies for projects added to the TIP and annual cost increase issues; and approved work on new studies or continuations of previ-

ous studies related to vehicle trip generation from new developments, curbside management, travel demand management strategies, equity and access issues in the Boston region and the Blue Hills, safety and operations at specific intersections, and corridor analyses for local and regional roadways. The studies are conducted by the Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS), which provides staff support to the MPO.

Arlington continues to be involved with the development of the plans and studies in the region, including the TIP, LRTP, the Unified Planning Work Program, and other projects.

Broadway Plaza

Broadway Plaza in Arlington Center will be reconstructed based on a design that was developed during the design process for the Arlington Center Sidewalk Project, which was completed in 2020. In fall 2021 work began on the Plaza in preparation for a Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) project to replace a major water pipe directly under the Plaza. This MWRA project was scheduled to begin in 2021 but was delayed until the winter of 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Restoration of the Plaza is expected to be completed in late spring 2022, after the MWRA completes their work in the winter. Improvements expected include removing the brick sidewalks and replacing them with concrete sidewalks, upgrading curb ramps and improving ADA accessibility, removing and replacing street trees, removing granite planters, and creating a more open and navigable Plaza space. Sidewalk seating for adjacent restaurants will be maintained. The Plaza pavement and design will be consistent with the design of the Arlington Center Sidewalk Project.

Energy Conservation & Climate Change Mitigation

Energy Conservation

In 2010 Arlington was named a Green Community by the state Department of Energy Resources. This designation was in recognition of the work that Arlington had done in the past to reduce energy usage, and the plans it had to further reduce energy use in the future. Arlington has substantially benefited from competitive Green Communities grants from the Green Communities Division, having received seven grant awards over the past eight years with a cumulative total of \$1,873,615, among the highest grant totals in the state. The most recent grant award of \$100,000 was received in 2021 and was used to replace inefficient lighting fixtures with high efficiency LEDs at the Peirce and Brackett Elementary Schools and upgrade insulation at the Community Safety Building. These projects are projected to save nearly \$20,000 cumulatively in electricity costs annually.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Clean Energy Future Committee

The Clean Energy Future Committee (CEFC) was created by the Select Board on July 16, 2018. The mission of the CEFC is to guide the Town of Arlington to a future where, by 2050, net emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases attributable to all sources in Town are net zero.

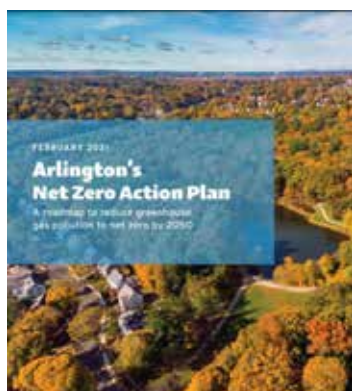
The Committee is charged with identifying short and long-term energy goals; facilitating research studies, projects, and collaborations; enlisting the support of residents and businesses; recommending changes to laws and regulations; seeking state and local funding; and taking any other actions necessary for Arlington to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

The Committee includes three members of the Department of Planning and Community Development: the Energy and Project Manager, Environmental Planner and Conservation Agent, and Senior Transportation Planner. There are currently 10 other members. The Committee met 11 times in 2021.

Net Zero Planning

In 2018 the Select Board voted to commit Arlington to becoming carbon neutral by 2050 (net zero emissions of greenhouse gases from all sources). Following this vote, Arlington and three municipalities began working with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), after receiving a Planning Assistance Grant from the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, to develop greenhouse gas inventories and net zero plans for each community. The Net Zero Action Plan was completed in and endorsed by the Select Board in February of 2021.

The Clean Energy Future Committee worked with the ARB to advance a zoning amendment to allow the replacement of home foundations on nonconforming lots if the resulting structure achieves energy efficiency standards. The amendment, Article 38, was approved by 2021 Annual Town Meeting.



Environmental Planning

Wellington Park & Mill Brook

In 2018 Arlington received an Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness MVP action grant in the amount of almost \$400,000 to increase flood storage capacity in Wellington Park, along Mill Brook. This increased flood storage capacity is approximately 70 cubic yards. Project construction included building the flood storage channel, removing invasive plant species, building a boardwalk, installing a porous asphalt pathway, and installing educational signage. In 2021 the last phase of the project was conducted to improve the recreational amenities of the park, which now include an extended porous asphalt path and a play area. The bridge over Mill Brook was found to pose a safety hazard and was removed. Some finishing touches remain for 2022, including planting new vegetation and landscaping, but public access to the park was reestablished in early December.



Wellington Park from above.

Stormwater Management

In close coordination with the Engineering Division, DPCD works to improve stormwater compliance throughout town. Massachusetts recently revised its stormwater permitting, creating more stringent regulations for nonpoint-source pollution transported through municipal stormwater systems. In 2021 DPCD worked with the Engineering Division to update the Town's Stormwater Management Bylaw, which came into effect April 26, 2021. The new version of the bylaw requires the Engineering Division's review of any project that would add 350+ sq. ft. of impervious surface. The goal of the review is to ensure that projects properly mitigate the impacts of additional stormwater flow and volume. In 2020 Arlington received a Coastal Pollutant Remediation Grant from the Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM) to install stormwater infrastructure in East Arlington. This grant was awarded with the partnership of the Mystic River Watershed Association (MyRWA) and the Town of Lexington. In 2021 the grant funded the construction of 30 infiltration trenches in East Arlington. The trenches reduce the quantity of pollutants entering Alewife Brook and the Mystic River, improving

compliance with the state stormwater permit. This grant expands on another CZM grant awarded to Arlington and MyRWA in 2019, through which two rain gardens and twenty trenches were constructed in East Arlington in 2020. In addition to the trenches, Arlington installed other best management practices for stormwater, including a rain garden, a porous pavement path, and a Vortech Unit, which traps and retains trash, debris, sediment, and hydrocarbons from stormwater runoff.

Regional Resilience and Adaptation

Arlington is a member of three regional resilience collaborations: the Metropolitan Area Planning Council Metro Mayors Coalition (MAPC MMC); Resilient Mystic Collaborative (RMC) facilitated by MyRWA; and the Charles River Climate Compact (CRCC) facilitated by the Charles River Watershed Association. As a member of these three collaborations, Arlington has committed to climate adaptation and resilience building actions and goals. These actions and goals focus on building capacity for stormwater management, renewable energy, urban heat island mitigation, floodwater retention, public engagement around resilience building, and inter-municipal project and policy alignment. Many of the climate change vulnerabilities that Arlington suffers from are impacting our neighboring communities as well. These regional collaborations strengthen Arlington's resilience through knowledge-sharing and regional projects that more efficiently leverage funding and technical opportunities.

Arlington chaired the RMC's Upper Mystic Stormwater Working Group through early 2021. Arlington and other Mystic Watershed communities that participate in the working group have received two regional Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) grants to identify locations for and design large-scale green infrastructure in the watershed. Total MVP funding thus far amounts to \$1,020,000. Participation in the RMC will continue through 2022.

Arlington, on behalf of the RMC, was awarded \$186,200 from the MVP Program for Fiscal Year 2021 for the Wicked Hot Mystic Project. The Town led this project through much of 2021 with RMC communities and the Museum of Science to mitigate extreme heat throughout the Mystic River Watershed. The Wicked Hot Mystic Project consists of three parts. Citizen science efforts measured and mapped ground-level heat and humidity data through community data collection. These data have been collected and analyzed and will be repackaged for public use in 2022, including for education materials and events designed to inform the communities within the watershed of the most vulnerable areas. Finally, participating communities will work with local artists to create public art, such as poetry, stories, photos, and other visual representations to engage more residents impacted by extreme heat events.

Arlington Reservoir

DPCD won a MassTrails grant in 2020 to support the design and engineering of a connector from the Minuteman Bikeway to Arlington Reservoir. During 2021 DPCD administered the grant and supported Arlington's Recreation Department and Parks & Recreation Commission with the design and planning of improvements to Hurd Field, where the connection will be made. The connection supports the implementation of the 2018 Reservoir Master Plan, which identified the need for a one-mile trail around the reservoir. The connector trail will unite these two extremely popular recreational resources with an ADA-compliant pathway.

Additionally, in November of 2021, DPCD secured a \$306,940 federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant for the Arlington Reservoir Restoration Project to fund additional improvements to the park, perimeter trail, and water body through erosion control measures, removal of invasive plants, and installation of native plantings; construction of overlook seating and an improved boat launch; reconstruction of entrance pathways; and installation of interpretive signage with historic, environmental, and recreational information.

Public Land Management Plan

The award of a Community Preservation Act grant allowed DPCD to issue a Request for Qualifications in 2021 for development of a public land management plan. The project will create a short- and long-term management plan for all open space, recreational land, and other natural resources in Arlington, including underutilized or unmanaged resources. The plan will detail a structure for maintaining and managing relevant lands, provide analysis of the policies that govern the lands in question, and advise on the treatment of such lands, including recommendations of best practices. The planning process will be led by DPCD with support from the Public Land Management Working Group and the chosen contractor.

Housing Initiatives

The Town of Arlington continued its strong support of affordable housing during 2021. The Housing Plan Implementation Committee (HPIC) continue its work to implement the goals of the Housing Production Plan (HPP) and participated in the update of the HPP throughout 2021.

Via the Select Board, the HPIC submitted a warrant article to the 2021 Annual Town Meeting to approve the submittal of a home rule petition to establish a Real Estate Transfer Fee. The fee would provide a dedicated funding source for the recently adopted municipal affordable housing trust fund.

DPCD completed a Fair Housing Action Plan with assistance from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC). The Fair Housing Action Plan includes an

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (AI), as currently required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). It also incorporates elements of an Assessment of Fair Housing, as previously required under the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Final Rule, to understand the Town's fair housing issues more deeply and to proactively identify strategies to address them. The plan identifies and prioritizes contributing factors to fair housing barriers and sets fair housing goals and priorities to address these contributing factors.

DPCD also served as Arlington's liaison with the North Suburban Consortium, an eight-community group that receives HOME funding from HUD to allocate to affordable housing and community development activities. The North Suburban Consortium completed the first year of its five-year consolidated plan. DPCD also represents Arlington on the Balance of State Continuum of Care, which promotes a commitment to the goal of ending homelessness, provides funding for these efforts by nonprofit providers and local governments to rehouse homeless individuals and families, promotes access to mainstream programs, and promotes self-sufficiency among individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

Additionally, multiple developments that include affordable housing units moved forward:

- Downing Square. HCA continued construction of 34 units of affordable housing at this property.
- 117 Broadway. HCA continued construction of 14 units of affordable housing at this property. A ribbon cutting to celebrate the completion of these two projects was held in December 2021.
- Thorndike Place. This Chapter 40B development returned for permitting by the Zoning Board of Appeals in 2020, and a comprehensive permit was issued in November 2021. The 136-unit project includes 124 senior independent living rental apartments and 12 townhouse units, with 31 total affordable homes (3 ownership units and 28 rental units).



HCA building at 117 Broadway.

- 1165R Mass Avenue. This 124-unit project, including 31 affordable units received a comprehensive permit in September 2021. Construction is expected to begin in winter, 2022.
- 882-892 Mass Ave. Construction began in 2021 on this mixed-use building, which includes a total of 21 rental housing units (three affordable housing units). The development is expected to be complete in spring, 2022.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST FUND BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board of Trustees (Board of Trustees) was established for the purpose of creating a separate fund "to provide for the preservation and creation of Community Housing in the Town of Arlington, as such term is defined in Section 2 of M.G.L. c.44B, the Community Preservation Act (CPA)."

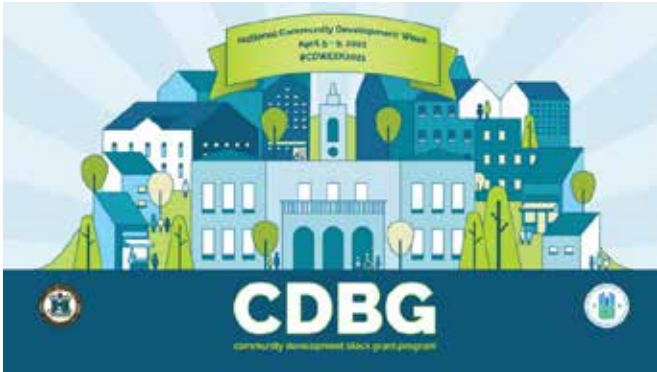
The Board of Trustees acts on the powers set forth in M.G.L. Chapter 44, Section 55C. The eight-member Board includes one ex officio non-voting member, one member of the Select Board, at least one tenant who earns a low- or moderate-income and residents in subsidized housing and understands tenant issues, and at least two representatives of local housing organizations dedicated to the creation and maintenance of affordable housing. All voting members are residents or representatives of local housing organizations, and have experience in areas of expertise applicable to advancing the purpose and goals of the trust, such as real estate, social services, banking, law, etc.

The Select Board appointed the Trustees in the fall of 2021. Immediately after appointment, the Trustees begin their initial work including drafting and receiving approval for a Declaration of Trust and Certificate of Trust, applying for Community Preservation Act funding, and developing an Annual Action Plan. The development of the Action Plan will closely align with recommendations in the updated Housing Production Plan.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM (CDBG)

This year, the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program supported public service programs, facilities and parks projects, affordable housing improvements, and small business pro-

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



grams, all intended to create safer, more accessible, and more inclusive spaces and opportunities, particularly for households earning a low or moderate income.

Several CDBG-funded public facilities and affordable housing projects were completed this year, including the Town Hall Plaza ADA-compliance project and construction of Food Link's Hub. The Whittemore Park revitalization project is underway, and the Department of Public Works' sidewalk and curb accessibility improvements are ongoing. Pandemic-related disruptions continue to delay the Arlington EATS Market construction, but the project is expected to be completed in 2022. The Housing Corporation of Arlington (HCA) made capital improvements to 17 existing homes in its portfolio and brought its 48-unit new construction project, the Downing Square-Broadway Initiative, closer to completion, with occupancy beginning incrementally in December 2021.

In 2020-21, CDBG funded eight public service agencies that assist low- and moderate-income-earning individuals and families with daily transportation, access to jobs, food security, scholarships to athletic and summer camp programs, tutoring services, and access to mental health and adult day health services. While some social programs were truncated due to the pandemic and related public health and safety restrictions, strategic reprogramming and use of funds enabled most Subrecipients to expand offerings; these services continue to hold significant community value.

Supplemental to the initial CDBG annual entitlement grant, special funds designated through two allocations of funding from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and

Economic Security (CARES) Act provided additional funding. This \$980,388 in funds, known as CDBG-CV, was used to provide tenant assistance, business assistance, and public services. Notably, 99 households benefited from the Arlington Emergency Tenant Assistance Program's three rounds of rental assistance and/or the Housing Corporation of Arlington's Homelessness Prevention Program. CDBG-CV also funded two economic development programs that provided financial and technical assistance to 41 small businesses in town and helped to create or retain 21 full-time equivalent jobs. Moreover, important public services were carried out to address the negative effects of the pandemic: the Council on Aging ran a technology lending library for seniors, Food Link, Inc., and Arlington EATS expanded food delivery services, Arlington Public Schools ran a tutoring program for students, and the Department of Health and Human Services facilitated COVID-19 testing clinics.

During National Community Development Week 2021 the Town showcased the work of community partners in serving Arlington residents in the areas of housing, human services, parks and public facilities, and economic development, through news pieces, social media, and a panel on food security, equity, and the role of federal grants at the local level. The Town was recognized by the National Community Development Association with the John A. Sasso National Community Development Week Award for its efforts to engage community members and elected and appointed officials with the CDBG program.

In total CDBG and CDBG-CV grants directly supported over 12,000 residents in 2020-2021.

MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

The Master Plan Implementation Committee (MPIC) was formed by the Arlington Redevelopment Board in September 2015, to implement the recommendations of the Arlington Master Plan, *Your Town Your Future*, adopted by the Redevelopment Board on February 4, 2015, and endorsed by Town Meeting on May 11, 2015. The Master Plan Implementation Committee typically meets quarterly to review its subcommittees' activities and the implementation table. The active subcommittees of the MPIC include the Zoning Bylaw Working Group and the Historical and Cultural Resources Working Group. Previous subcommittees included the Mill Brook Study Committee, the Residential Study Group, and the Zoning Recodification Working Group.

Zoning Bylaw Working Group

The Zoning Bylaw Working Group (ZBWG) is reviewing and proposing zoning amendments as identi-



Arlington EATS volunteers prepare bags of groceries.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

fied through the Master Plan and the recodification processes. During 2021 the Zoning Bylaw Working Group completed work with DPCD staff and consultants, RKG and Harriman, on the Economic Analysis of the Industrial Zoning Districts, a project contemplated in the Master Plan to modernize the industrial zoning districts. The project goals include positioning Arlington to attract new businesses and jobs in emerging growth industries to the Industrial District; and creating opportunities through which Arlington can realize greater revenue with strategic amendments to the Zoning Bylaw and Zoning Map. Zoning recommendations were advanced to 2021 Annual Town Meeting, which voted to adopt the amendments. The updated Zoning Bylaw was approved by the Massachusetts Attorney General in fall, 2021.



In the fall of 2021 the ZBWG reviewed the Zoning Audit included in the Master Plan (2015) and as part of the recodification of the Zoning Bylaw (2018). The ZBWG began identifying and prioritizing outstanding zoning amendments, including reducing the overall number of Business Zoning Districts, reducing the number of uses requiring Special Permits, amending the Special Permit for Large Additions, addressing parking issues throughout the bylaw, and amending standards for townhouses. Amendments will be advanced to Annual Town Meeting and a potential Special Town Meeting in 2022.

The ZBWG includes representatives from the Redevelopment Board, the Zoning Board of Appeals, the Conservation Commission, the Master Plan Implementation Committee, a Town Meeting member, the Town Manager and a Town Manager appointee, Inspectional Services staff, and DPCD staff.

Historic and Cultural Resources Working Group

Following the completion of the Community-Wide Historic Preservation Survey Master Plan in 2019 the Historic and Cultural Resources Working Group (HCRWG) looked to act on the recommendations of the plan. During 2021, the HCRWG began two projects: documentation of historic municipal resources and an archaeological reconnaissance study. The historical municipal resources project includes completing specialized and detailed documentation to inventory the older

Town-owned structures, cemeteries, and landscapes. Completion of this documentation will allow the Town to pursue grant funds for preservation. The HCRWG prepared a Request for Proposals for the Archaeological Reconnaissance Study, which will be posted in spring, 2022. The project will produce a comprehensive inventory of known archaeological resources in Arlington and identify areas of high potential for further planning and preservation. These two projects are funded by the Community Preservation Act Committee.

The HCRWG includes representatives from the Town's Historic Districts Commission and Historical Commission, the Arlington Historical Society, and DPCD.

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The goal of the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) is to enhance the quality of life in Arlington by improving safety, mobility, and access for people using all modes of transportation, and contribute to improving the environment and public health. In this effort, the TAC works closely with the Arlington Police Department's (APD) Traffic Division, the Department of Public Works (DPW), and the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD), along with Arlington Schools and the Arlington Bicycle Advisory Committee (ABAC).

The TAC was established in 2001 by the Select Board, which serves as the Traffic Authority for Arlington, to advise the Board on transportation matters.

2021 Major Activities

Chestnut Street Safety and Accessibility

In response to the death of Ann Derosiers, who was struck and killed by a driver while walking in the crosswalk at Chestnut Street and Chestnut Terrace on December 31, 2019, TAC worked to gather public feedback and finalize recommendations for improving pedestrian safety at this crosswalk and along Chestnut Street as a whole. With the assistance of DPCD, a public listening session was held in March 2021 to share initial ideas and recommendations and take public comment on how to improve safety on Chestnut Street. From this listening session and over discussions at several TAC meetings, the Committee developed a plan for short-



Improvements to Chestnut St. recommended by Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) to Select Board.

term and long-term safety improvements to Chestnut Street. These recommendations were presented to the Select Board on June 21, 2021, which unanimously approved them. Town staff have been working to implement the recommendations, which has required review by MassDOT due to an old grant agreement related to Chestnut Street. TAC has continued to keep track of these improvements and see if there are other adjustments that can be made as they are implemented, such as adjusting the timing of the light at Chestnut Street and Mystic Street. TAC also recommended studying the intersections of Chestnut Street at Mystic Street and Chestnut Street at Medford Street to make them safer and more friendly to pedestrians and cyclists. TAC installed pedestrian flags at the Chestnut Street crosswalk as a short-term improvement measure..

Safe Routes to School: Dallin School Arrival/Dismissal Plan

Dallin School approached the Massachusetts Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program to re-examine their arrival/dismissal plan after a non-injury collision in front of the school had school administrators and parents concerned. Dallin School staff and caregivers have been concerned about poor driver behavior and compliance during arrival/dismissal, and general traffic safety, for a few years. Dallin School staff and the PTO came to TAC for help implementing a pilot program to make Florence Avenue from George Street to Renfrew Street a school street that would be closed to vehicular traffic except school buses during the arrival and dismissal times. A TAC working group is helping the school develop a plan that will meet APD requirements, and TAC has collected data to measure the traffic impact that this plan may have on other streets in the neighborhood. The pilot program may be implemented in early 2022.

Washington Street Traffic Recommendations

Residents of Washington Street came to the Select Board with concerns about the southernmost stretch of Washington street, just north of Brattle Street, which is a steep, narrow private way that does not allow for two vehicles to pass each other. It is also a street often used by bicyclists and pedestrians to access the Minuteman Bikeway, as there is an entry connected to this section of the street. A TAC working group looked at Washington Street from Summer Street to Brattle Street and contacted several town departments like the Fire Department and School Transportation Department about potential solutions. The group is developing some possible improvements that the Town could make on the publicly owned portion of Washington Street on the north end, and the improvements that the abutters could make on the southernmost part, which is a private way.

Wellesley Rd/Thompson School Traffic Calming

Residents of Wellesley Road requested TAC to review making it one-way away from the Thompson School. In the mornings, drivers use Wellesley Road to get to the school and there is a high volume of pedestrian activity but there are no sidewalks. At the same time concerns were raised about safe access to the rebuilt playground at Lussiano Field. The two efforts were combined in a single project to consider traffic calming around the school. TAC conducted observations near Wellesley Road in late 2019, and the school asked the MassDOT Safe Routes to School program to conduct arrival and dismissal observations at the school in 2020. The working group has conducted observations at morning arrival in fall 2021 to see the impact of increased vehicular traffic and the return of all students to school.

Development Projects: Thorndike Place and 1165 R Massachusetts Ave

TAC completed its review of the Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) for the Thorndike Place proposed development in East Arlington, in a follow-up to previous reviews the Committee had completed for different iterations of the project. This was completed in January 2021 and TAC has continued to monitor the status of the project as it has evolved over the course of the year.

The TAC Executive Committee was also asked to review the TIA for the 1165R Mass Ave proposed development and provide comments to the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) via DPCD. These were provided in March and June of 2021.

Mt Gilboa Neighborhood and Crosby Street Traffic Calming

TAC received requests this year from the Mt. Gilboa and Crosby Street neighborhoods to look at concerns of excessive speeding and poor driver behavior. TAC working groups continue to review these areas and have met with the residents of these areas to discuss their concerns. For the Mt. Gilboa neighborhood, DPW was scheduled to install a flashing pedestrian warning beacon and a speed feedback sign on Lowell Street, in a follow up to previous work approved by the Select Board. TAC will review this change to determine how it impacts the concerns of the neighborhood residents.

Crosswalk Flag Program

TAC has continued to monitor and maintain the pedestrian crossing flag program at 11 crosswalks in Arlington.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

PARKING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Parking Advisory Committee works with Town staff to make parking policy recommendations for the business and commercial areas within the town, particularly in Arlington Heights, Arlington Center, and East Arlington. Within these areas, the Committee makes recommendations to the Select Board regarding public on-street and off-street parking, freight loading and unloading in the public way, on-street public transit stops, public bicycle and low-speed vehicle parking, and drop-off/pick-up areas for taxis and rideshare services. Another key responsibility of the Committee is to recommend allocations of the Parking Benefits District (PBD) funds to specific transportation projects in Arlington Center. This funding is generated by metered parking revenues and the net proceeds are reinvested back into Arlington Center to improve transportation safety, access, and curbside management. The allocation of these funds for projects must be approved by Town Meeting annually.

The Committee met six times in 2021, primarily to discuss recommended appropriations for the PBD fund, address an Arlington Center parking request referred to it by the Select Board, and receive updates about the reconstruction of Broadway Plaza. The Massachusetts Water Resource Authority (MWRA) will be undergoing utility work underneath Broadway Plaza through early 2022. In the spring Broadway Plaza will be restored with a new design that was developed along with the plans for the Arlington Center Sidewalk Project.

Although parking meter fees for on- and off-street parking spaces were being collected throughout the year, revenues have not rebounded to pre-pandemic levels. However, initial projections show that revenues in FY2022 are expected to surpass revenues in FY2021. The implementation of mobile parking payment via PaybyPhone has been particularly successful and has provided a contactless avenue for drivers to pay for their parking. PaybyPhone usage steadily increased during 2021 and December saw the highest usage and revenue collected by PaybyPhone, with approximately 6,900 transactions, 4,100 unique users, and \$11,300 in total revenue based on PaybyPhone data.

Due to the depressed funding during last fiscal year, PBD funds were used only for seasonal plantings in the Center for FY2021. However, the Committee expects to have more funding this year that can be allocated to other projects, including public space improvements, that will improve safety and accessibility in the Center.

BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Arlington Bicycle Advisory Committee (ABAC) was appointed by the Select Board in 1996 to advise the Town on local bicycling conditions. The all-volunteer committee promotes all forms of safe bicycling on town roadways and the Minuteman Bikeway — from recreational riding to using the bicycle for transportation and errands. The Committee has the support of the Arlington Police Department who have a COBWEB trained officer attend the meetings remotely, as well as regular attendance by the Senior Transportation Planner of the Department of Planning and Community Development. While the remote meeting has removed an element of personal engagement in the meetings, it has by and large provided a good forum for discussions for a group our size. It has also enabled others to attend the meeting who may have had difficulty doing so in person.

An ABAC Executive Board member was a member of the Mass Ave/Appleton Design Review Committee and was supportive of the Option 2 Design presented by the consultants Green International. While initially disappointed in the selection of Option 1 by the Select Board, ABAC was pleased with the comprise version of the plan that was approved and implemented in November 2021. The Committee looks forward to being involved with the planning for the more permanent solution to the intersection in the future when the funding is available.



New signage, pavement markings, and bollards at Mass Ave and Appleton Street, November 2021

Another significant project with ABAC member support and involvement has been the Minuteman Bikeway Planning Project. Assisting with the selection of the consultants for the project. ABAC member Jack Johnson was part of the selection committee for the project consultants. The Committee also assisted in putting out the survey that the consultants, Kittelson & Associates, produced as part of the project and attended the first public meeting in November. The Committee will continue to be involved with the project as it progresses towards completion in the spring.

There has been continued monitoring of the functionality of the new Lake Street/Bikeway crossing and there has been some constructive changes made to the functioning of the traffic signals and intersection approaches. In the same area the Committee has contin-

ued to advocate for the installation of bike lane pavement markings and signs for the Lake Street bike lane and shared-lane markings.

Since the Eco Counter at the Bikeway near Swan Place continues to provide data on Minuteman Bikeway usage, the Committee has worked on collecting bicycle and pedestrian data at other locations of interest. This year in late spring a volunteer effort was organized to monitor the usage of the bicycle infrastructure in Arlington Center at the Mass Ave/Mystic Street/Pleasant Street intersection. Manual counts were taken at the corners to understand how cyclists use the intersection's markings and how well the bike box functions for the numbers of cyclists using it.



Cyclists crowd the bike box at Mass Ave & Pleasant St, summer 2021

Working with Bedford and Lexington, we have revamped the Tri Town meeting of the Bike Committees along the Minuteman Bikeway to include information about recent bicycle-centric developments in our respective towns. We are also looking to develop this forum into a more regional group, enabling us to ensure that we have uniformity over the various trails with regards to standards and rules as well as good connectivity between the trails themselves.

The Committee has several initiatives it will be working on in 2022. Members of the Committee will participate in a working group with the Department of Planning and Community Development to revise the bicycle lane design guidelines to align with the new Connect Arlington Sustainable Transportation Plan and the Town's Complete Streets Policy. Members are exploring using existing ABAC funds to link up with MassBike to facilitate some bicycle education in elementary schools. The Committee is in the early stages of developing plans for a public spring cleanup of the Bikeway that has not occurred since the start of the pandemic. ABAC is also planning on bringing back the annual Tour of Arlington as part of the statewide bike week celebrations in May.

Finally, ABAC continues to work on strategic planning for the future. Just before the State of Emergency set up in response to COVID-19, ABAC conducted a retreat to identify areas that the committee is interested in to concentrate on for the future. A few main topics that were identified were connectivity with other towns and trails, more bike infrastructure, and enforcement of road regulations for all users.

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

The Arlington Conservation Commission (ACC) is required by state and town laws to protect and preserve wetlands, waterways, and their surrounding areas under ACC jurisdiction. The ACC is composed of seven volunteer Commissioners and two volunteer Associate Commissioners, who are appointed by the Town Manager with the approval of the Select Board and supported by the Environmental Planner & Conservation Agent at bimonthly meetings and onsite visits. The ACC is mandated to protect wetlands, waterways, water supplies, fisheries, wildlife, and wildlife habitat as well as regulate floodplain activities through its administration of the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and the Arlington Bylaw for Wetlands Protection.

In 2021 the ACC held twenty-three public meetings, one fewer than usual owing to the cancellation of the July 1st meeting. The ACC provided coordination, monitoring, permit review, and consultation on numerous residential, commercial, and municipal projects throughout the town. The Commission issued seven Permits/Orders of Conditions, six Determinations of Applicability, and six Certificates of Compliance.

The ACC also protects and manages the Town's Conservation Lands and natural resources through collaboration with other entities and grants from various sources, as described below.

Water Bodies Oversight

The ACC, through its Water Bodies Working Group (WBWG), continued to monitor important water bodies in town, including Spy Pond, Mill Brook, the Arlington Reservoir, and Hill's Pond in Menotomy Rocks Park.

The WBWG commissioned a report on the health of Spy Pond, including its water quality and the state of its aquatic vegetation. The report found considerable historic contamination which, together with stormwater runoff, create an environment in which opportunistic and invasive species crowd out other pond life. The report also reviewed past management efforts and recommended alternatives for 2022.

The improvements at Wellington Park will improve water quality in Mill Brook and create more robust native vegetated buffers along the brook's bank.

Construction at Arlington Reservoir prevented removal of invasive water chestnuts this year. The newly built access ramp will allow harvesting to resume in 2022.

Hill's Pond in the heavily used Menotomy Rocks Park suffers from water quality and invasive plant problems. Monthly site visits for proactive low-dose chemical herbicide treatments in 2021 proved successful in reducing invasives and prevented a harmful algal bloom from developing. The Conservation Commission also

green-lighted the addition of a fourth aerator in the pond for the improvement of water quality.

Land Stewards

The ACC's volunteer arm, Arlington Land Stewards (ALS), assists in managing 28 Town-owned lands comprising approximately 53 acres. Land Stewards monitor, coordinate, and maintain open space of their choice, with guidance from the ACC. The Land Stewards remained dormant during 2021 owing to COVID-19 concerns but look to be reinvigorated in the spring of 2022.

Arlington's Great Meadows

Arlington's Great Meadows (AGM) are comprised of 193 acres, making it Arlington's largest open space parcel, although located in East Lexington. AGM is mostly wetlands but contains many upland trails that make connections to the Minuteman Bikeway, the Arlington Reservoir, and the Whipple Hill conservation area through the ACROSS Trail System. The Friends of Arlington's Great Meadows (FoAGM) are active in caring for and increasing Arlington's awareness of this wonderful area. In 2021 public events were curtailed although many people still visited there. In the spring FoAGM organized a boardwalk repair project that was then carried out by Arlington Scout Troop 313. FoAGM volunteers maintain the trails, boardwalks, and kiosks at the Meadows. This also includes removing invasive plants such as Japanese Knotweed and Oriental Bittersweet. More information, including further details on 2021 activities, can be found online at FoAGM.org.

The construction work continued at the former nursing site on Emerson Gardens Road that has been a major access point to AGM. When that work is completed in 2022 there will be new public parking and an access path to AGM thanks to the efforts of the public and officials in Arlington and Lexington.

Supporting the ZBA for 40B Comprehensive Permits

Thorndike Place 40B: The ACC provided five sets of formal comments plus one set of comments jointly prepared with the Town's peer review consultant, to the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) in support of its hearings to consider the wetlands and stormwater components of the Thorndike Place Comprehensive Permit Application. To assist the ZBA, which is administering the Town of Arlington Wetlands Protection Bylaw as part of the review, the ACC provided extensive and detailed comments, recommendations, and justifications for permit conditions and Bylaw Waivers. The ACC publicly promoted these recommendations at nine ZBA hearings in 2021. The ACC's input was pivotal in the Applicant's re-design of the project and the ZBA's adoption

of permit conditions to minimize impacts to wetland resource areas, flooding, stormwater, and wildlife habitat. The Comprehensive Permit was issued on November 22, 2021. Additionally, the ACC was an active participant in discussions with the Town Manager and other town departments on the disposition and potential for Conservation Restrictions on approximately 12 acres of the remaining property.

1165R Massachusetts Ave 40B: The ACC provided four sets of formal comments and hosted several Working Sessions with the ZBA, the applicant, and the Town's peer review consultant to facilitate the free exchange of ideas and to further develop recommendations by the ACC on project design, specifically for the re-location of Ryder Brook and for the enhancement of Mill Brook resource areas on-site. The ACC also provided direct comments on Waivers and draft permit conditions and publicly promoted these recommendations at 8 ZBA hearings for this 40B project. The Comprehensive Permit was issued on September 17, 2021. In addition to supporting the ZBA, the ACC coordinated with Town Counsel to evaluate an Historic Mill Complex exemption to the Riverfront Area wetlands regulations for this project – the first time this exemption had been considered in Arlington.

Climate Change Initiatives

The ACC and its Agent developed and presented "Arlington's Climate Resiliency Wetlands Protection Regulations" at the Environmental Business Council's Climate Change webinar. The ACC continues to be a leader in local climate change resilience regulations for wetlands protection as Arlington's local regulations have been adopted, wholly or in part, by several other towns and cities in the Commonwealth, most recently in the regulations of the Town of Wrentham, July 2021.

Regulation Update

The ACC had drafted several goals and actions for 2021 towards strengthening and updating regulations for performance standards, permitting efficiency, and process clarity. The following goals were achieved in 2021:

- Revision of the Arlington Regulations for Wetlands Protection, which will be finalized for approval in 2022. These revisions were delayed due to difficulty in administering the Commission without an Agent for several months in 2021. Revisions include adding an administrative review process to create an expedited review of certain small projects, updating vegetation replacement requirements, and strengthening climate change resilience.
- Updating the master permit tracking list and

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

adding tolling (COVID-19 allowance) for tracking permit expiration dates.

- Developed “Living with Wetlands” brochure as educational outreach material.

Goals and Beyond

The ACC will continue to encourage, support, and assist the various volunteer and environmental advocacy groups that are dedicated to preserving the Town’s valued conservation lands and other open spaces. These groups include, among others: Arlington Land Stewards, Arlington Land Trust, Open Space Committee, Friends of Arlington’s Great Meadows, Friends of Spy Pond Park, Friends of Menotomy Rock Park, and the Mystic River Watershed Association. Additional specific goals include the following:

- Continue to strengthen and update regulations for permitting efficiency and process clarity with the specific goal to update the local Wetlands Regulations in 2022.
- Improve the stewardship of conservation lands through better coordinated land management. Expect Land Management RFP (from CPA funding) to result in actionable recommendations.
- Improve communication and educational outreach to residents in resource areas.
- Continue to look for opportunities to work collaboratively with neighboring towns and allied organizations towards protection of wetland resources.

Acknowledgments

ACC sincerely thanks all individuals, Friends groups, and organizations that contributed directly or indirectly to the activities of its 56th year. A special thanks goes out to Emily Sullivan, Environmental Planner & Conservation Agent, for her dedication and support to preserve the Town’s natural resources and conservation lands.

OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

Arlington’s Open Space Committee (OSC) was established by Town Meeting in 1996. Members, appointed by the Town Manager and approved by the Select Board, include concerned citizens and representatives of key Town departments and commissions. The Committee meets monthly to exchange ideas and discuss ways to protect, maintain, and promote the Town’s open spaces and recreational resources. The Committee serves an oversight function but does not have management responsibility for Town properties. It seeks to enhance communication and coordination among those entities that do have ownership and management au-

thority. In addition, the OSC works to raise broad-based community concerns and to advocate for the protection, stewardship, and appropriate uses of the Town’s open spaces, natural resources, and recreational facilities.

The Committee’s primary responsibility is to prepare the Town’s official Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP), monitor its provisions and goals, and document accomplishments. The OSRP is a foundational document for all Town-wide planning and programs relating to parks, playgrounds, playing fields, natural resources, conservation land, sustainable development, climate resiliency, and other open space issues. The current Plan covering the years 2015 to 2022 was prepared and approved as required by the state and adopted as Town policy in the fall of 2015. This plan is set to expire in May 2022. Communities with a current state approved OSRP are eligible to apply for funding from various state programs. To date, the Town has leveraged its OSRP to receive more than \$1 million in Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) funds for parks and open spaces, as well as grants from other sources.

In preparation for updating the OSRP for 2022-2029, the Open Space Committee, through the Department of Planning and Community Development, requested and received a Community Preservation Act grant for Fiscal Year 2021 to hire a consultant to help with the process, beginning in January 2021. Throughout 2021 Committee members and DPCD staff met with the consulting firm, Horsley Witten Group, to develop a timeline and process for public participation, to compile current demographic and other required data, and to document accomplishments and other changes related to open space and recreation resources since 2015. Two community forums were held via Zoom, in June and December, to engage residents in the planning process, and an online survey received more than 1,000 responses full of ideas on community needs and suggestions for future planning.

The OSC section of the Town’s website is updated regularly with current and former OSRP documents, as well as several ongoing initiatives. “Take A Walk” is a digital map-based project to encourage residents to get outside to explore Arlington’s diverse parks and recreational facilities. The website has links to a Town-wide map showing all interconnecting routes as well as seven neighborhood maps. The Take A Walk maps can also be used with Experiencing Arlington’s Open Spaces, a separate interactive application highlighting nineteen major open space sites that are featured in the OSRP. For each site there are multiple photographs and a brief description of the property, as well as a map showing access points and internal walking trails.

In 2022 the Committee will continue working with the OSRP consultants to complete the Plan update, and then to reach out to local stakeholders to begin to implement the goals and objectives outlined in the Plan.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Members will continue to enhance use of the Town website and social media to disseminate Take A Walk maps and other information about local open spaces and recreational facilities. Members will also continue their collaborations with Town departments and community organizations to ensure that open space and recreation recommendations are fully incorporated into all future Town-wide planning.

ENVISION ARLINGTON

About Envision Arlington

Envision Arlington, established by Town Meeting in June 1992, is a collection of committees and task groups that brings together residents, Town employees, and Town leaders to foster an engaged, culturally diverse, and civically active community. The Standing Committee is charged to “create, implement, monitor, and review methods for town-wide participation in the Envision Arlington process.”

The Standing Committee is grateful to Sue Dectrow and Elisabeth Carr-Jones for their years of service as members of the Envision Arlington Standing Committee. The Committee welcomed new members Michael Brownstein, Alex Bagnall, Jagat Adhiya, and Caroline Murray in 2021.

Annual Town Survey

Envision Arlington volunteers work with Town departments and organizations to create an annual survey of the priorities and opinions of people in Arlington. Results of the survey are provided to Town Meeting and to the groups who helped compose the survey.

The 2021 Town Survey was administered between January and March. The survey was primarily available online, with paper surveys available to those who needed them. A survey notice was mailed to 18,500 households as an insert to the Town’s Annual Census mailing in January. A total of 3,380 complete responses were received, providing feedback on resilience to community wellness, diversity equity and inclusion, education and childcare, senior issues, and Town communications. Reports on the 2021 Town Survey, as well as reports from prior years, are available at arlingtonma.gov/envision.

Task Group Highlights

Diversity Task Group

The Diversity Task Group (DTG) is a group of Arlington residents who are committed to making our town inclusive, to fostering awareness of issues that affect the voice and experience of the historically marginalized within Arlington, and to creating community and safe spaces where all voices are welcome. Our members are engaged in dozens of DEI-related or-

ganizations and efforts in town. Bringing our diverse backgrounds and experiences, we meet monthly to engage, share, and educate ourselves, operating under our member agreed upon guidelines for respectful dialogue. In between meetings, we connect regularly with email communications about Town and regional issues and events of interest.

Throughout the year DTG invites representatives of Town organizations and committees with potential DEI influence and impact to share and discuss with our members. Special guests in 2021 included: Arlington Chief of Police, Julie Flaherty; Arlington Public Schools Superintendent, Dr. Liz Homan; and Arlington Public Schools DEI Director, Margaret Thomas. Invited guests for the beginning of 2022 include Arlington Director of Veterans’ Services, Jeff Chunglo; and, Housing Plan Implementation Committee member and Arlington Affordable Housing Trust Fund Chair, Karen Kelleher.

Diversity Task Group Highlights

- Appointed a DTG representative to the Police Civilian Advisory Board Steering Committee, and received periodic reports from said representative, providing feedback as requested.
- Partnered with Robbins Library in communicating the events around the 2021 Arlington Reads Together, for which DTG is the founder and a lead contributor and participated in the selection of the title for 2022.
- Supported the roll-out of the 2021 Envision Arlington annual survey as well as plans for the development and roll-out of the 2022 survey.
- Received presentations by authors of various 2021 Town Meeting warrant articles pertinent to issues of diversity and equity.
- Responded to DEI-related issues brought to the Diversity Task Group’s attention re: construction signage for the new high school, and the Arlington Commission for Arts and Culture--Arts Arlington Youth Banner Initiative.
- Engaged in a visioning session for DTG’s 2021-2022 year.
- Attended the public session of the Arlington Police Department’s Hate Crimes Enforcement Training.

Fiscal Resources

The Fiscal Resources Task Group (FRTG) researches and discusses topics related to the Town’s finances and reports findings and recommendations to the appropriate Town departments, officials, and the public at large. In 2021 the following activities were undertaken:

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- Annual Town Meeting Warrant Review: FRTG Members discussed ATM Agenda
- Financial Interview: Town Comptroller Ian Cody discussed her team's duties with FRTG
- New Growth Recognition Process: FRTG continued its ongoing review of the activities of Inspectional Services (Building Permits/Inspections) and Assessor (New Growth determination) and how they are integrated to insure the proper assessment of New Growth.

Civic Engagement Group

The Civic Engagement Group (CEG) launched in the fall of 2021 with the goal to create more and better avenues for Arlingtonians to engage constructively with each other and with the institutions and decision-making bodies of Town government. Its inaugural meeting was the first of two brainstorming sessions with Len Diggins, a member of the Select Board. The CEG also hosted a Warrant Article Primer & Workshop with Town Counsel Doug Heim and Deputy Town Counsel Michael Cunningham. In addition, the CEG hosted a forum on Reprecincting with Juli Brazile, the Town Clerk, and members of the Reprecincting Working Group. Although its organizational structure will likely remain flexible, the CEG is new as of 2021, and is determining whether to form specialized subgroups. CEG seeks to engage in activities that are of interest to participating members and the wider public. Since the CEG is a task group, there is no formal membership; all members of the community are welcome to join the CEG monthly meetings at which any ideas and concerns can be shared.

More information on CEG, including upcoming meetings, their website, and YouTube channel may be found at arlingtonma.gov/envision.

Sustainable Arlington

Sustainable Arlington is one of three committees of Envision Arlington's Environment Task Group and is a chapter of the Massachusetts Climate Action Network. It promotes environmental awareness and climate resilience, while engaging residents and Town government in protecting our local environment. More information about Sustainable Arlington may be found at the task group's website: sustainablearlington.org.

2021 started with a partial leadership change. Co-Chair Amos Meeks stepped down and was succeeded by Tom Ehbrecht, while Brucie Moulton continues as Co-Chair.

Throughout 2021 Sustainable Arlington focused on the Town's Net Zero Action Plan and its Co-Chairs joined working groups formed to implement the plan. Sustainable Arlington also supported related initiatives, endorsing Warrant Article 38 Energy Efficient Homes

on Nonconforming Lots which passed at Town Meeting, and publicizing the proposed Net Zero Building Code for Massachusetts which will be finalized in 2022.

To further educate Arlington residents about the Town's net zero goals and steps that residents can take, Sustainable Arlington worked with Arlington Community Education to create two panels held in the fall:

- Net Zero: Arlington's Efforts to Eliminate Greenhouse Gas Emissions, with Ken Pruitt (Project Energy Manager) and Ryan Katofsky (Clean Energy Future Committee; High School Building Committee; Sustainable Arlington)
- Local Efforts Toward Zero Carbon Homes, a panel of 6 Arlington homeowners discussing steps they've taken to transition their homes off fossil fuels.

Additional accomplishments by Sustainable Arlington in 2021 include:

- Collaborated with Sustainable Middlesex to present a multi-town March 13 event, "Carbon Countdown 2021," on Massachusetts climate legislation, with Sen. Michael Barrett and Rep. Tami Gouveia and breakout sessions covering local initiatives to combat climate change.
- Supported a Declaration of Climate Emergency which was presented to and approved by the Select Board.
- Participated in Arlington EcoWeek, support bicycle transportation and practices that enhance native pollinator habitat.
- Collaborated with Arlington Community Education and the Mystic Pollinator Pathways Group on a 2-session class, Gardening for Native Pollinators; and co-sponsored the class, "Natural Deathcare: Caring for the Body, Caring for the Earth."
- Met with Arlington High School summer interns working on the Remembrance of Climate Futures historic markers project designed by Northeastern University Prof. Thomas Starr and already implemented in several Massachusetts communities.
- Hosted a series of speakers at monthly meetings on:
 - residential options for solar hot water: John Moore, architect, New England Solar Hot Water
 - Arlington's Significant Environmental Impact (SEI) gas leaks: Ann Boland, Town Manager's Gas Leaks Task Force and Mothers Out Front.
 - Pulling by the Curtain on the Hydrogen Hoax: by Gas Leaks Allies members Sarah Griffith

(Climate Reality Project), Cathy Kristofferson (Pipeline Awareness Network for the Northeast), and Claire Humphrey, Mothers Out Front.

- Alewife Brook Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs) and sewage pollution: Kristin. Alexander and David White, Save the Alewife Brook.
- The Future of Heat Bill, S.2148/H.3298: Anne Wright, Mothers Out Front.

Spy Pond Committee

The Spy Pond Committee monitors the health of Spy Pond and assists the Conservation Commission and Dept. of Public Works with its care. The Committee is part of the Environment Task Group of Envision Arlington. Additional details may be found at arlingtonma.gov/spypond.

At the end of January 2021 there was good ice with 200 skaters and walkers on Spy Pond. A 13" yellow perch was caught on the first day of ice fishing. In April, an 18" chain pickerel was caught. The swans laid eight eggs on Elizabeth Island. Sadly, the female swan died after the eggs hatched in May. The male swan took over and raised four cygnets. He found a mate after the cygnets fledged in October. Other animals include coyotes, foxes, and eagles. A Great Horned Owl is occasionally heard.

Instead of distributing the fertilizer flyer to households, we worked with the Conservation Commission on a fertilizer flyer for all of Arlington. It was distributed electronic and posted at businesses and public sites. One of our members joined Arlington's fishing line working group. Fishhooks and fishing lines are dangerous to animals and people.

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation dredged the sandbar located in the western portion of the pond. They removed three to four feet of sand that was deposited by the storm drain from Rt. 2 and Arlington Heights. They removed the stone pillars that directed sand into the cove. The Arlington Department of Public Works installed a hydrodynamic separator at the foot of Alfred Road. Kelwyn Manor cleaned its catch basins.

Kate Meierdiercks of Tufts and Siena colleges found her Spy Pond data from 2001. The data reveals a deep, narrow basin near the Rt. 2 path and storm drain. The west basin is seven feet deeper than the south basin. It is probably the remains of a larger basin filled in by the Rt. 2 expansion project of 1968.

This year was unusually wet with water overflowing into Little Pond throughout the summer. Hurricanes Henri and Ida dumped over 4" of rain apiece. The heavy rain, dredging, and limited aquatic plants led to an algae bloom from mid- August to the end of September.

Dredging and COVID-19 restrictions cancelled Spy Pond Trails Day for a second year. Dredged sand blocked the Rt. 2 path for most of the summer. Two plus containers of contaminated sand and sediment were sent to Canada. Three geotubes of dredged sand eventually tested clean. Rocks up to a foot across prevented dredging the sandbar closest to the Rt. 2 storm drain.

The Spy Pond Committee and Conservation Commission developed a treatment plan for Spy Pond. It included a fertilizer flyer, aquatic biologist, and monitoring for water chestnut and Eurasian watermilfoil. These goals were met. The treatment goal was to slow down the natural process of eutrophication with multiple, limited treatments when the plants were young. The growth of aquatic plants was monitored by rake tosses.

Solitude Lake Management treated excessive curly leaf pondweed in May. Spy Pond was excellent for boating and water activities into August. The algae bloom in mid-August led to a harmful algae bloom advisory by the Board of Health. One morning, Spy Pond was pea green in front of the condominiums. Solitude Lake Management treated invasive spiny naiad in early September. Spy Pond remained a murky green until early October.

In late September, SWCA Environmental Consultants of Amherst spent a day on Spy Pond and reported their findings and recommendations. Their conclusion was that Spy Pond was over-treated with aquatic herbicides. SWCA's plant survey and Solitude Lake Management's plant survey found no aquatic plants other than Nitella (a form of algae). Next year, we need to improve the management of Spy Pond. We have initiated discussions with several companies.

The Spy Pond Committee held its traditional barbecue in June.

Reservoir Committee

With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic 2021 continued to be a different kind of year for the Arlington Reservoir Committee. Our committee met only remotely which simplified finding a meeting room. The beach, on the other hand, was open for a full season of swimming, and with improved water quality provided by the new water-treatment system.

The Wildlife Habitat Garden was in its twelfth growing season, and we had monthly in-person workdays with reasonable precautions. In addition to weeding out undesirable plants and removing much of the dried tall grass from the previous season, we also relocated some of the tall grass clumps to prevent these from dominating the garden. We engaged volunteer support working with Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, and new groups like Boston Volunteers, and Boston Area Return Peace Corps Volunteers. Several new volunteers returned regularly for our gardening days.

Water chestnut mechanical harvesting was not

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

done this summer because of the construction work on the Reservoir area and the lack of access. There was also no hand harvesting.

The Reservoir Master Plan moved into Phase 2 construction with work on the perimeter path and shoreline. The work on the parking lot and beach area is mostly done and will be completed in the spring before the 2022 beach season. Among other things, the Wildlife Habitat Garden now has a new post and rail fence. Public documents related to the Master Plan as well as other Committee activities and photos may be found at arlingtonreservoir.org

The Arlington Land Trust (ALT) maintains a stewardship fund for the work of the Reservoir Committee. This has mostly been used for the Wildlife Habitat Garden expenses. Those wishing to make a tax-deductible donation for this can do so through the ALT website at arlingtonlandtrust.org.

Education Task Group

The education task group was approached by the new APS Superintendent to reengage on a district-wide planning, vision, and strategy exercise. This subject was raised and championed by the Envision Arlington Education Task Group between 2015 and 2018 before the community's focus shifted to the AHS rebuild and the search for the new superintendent. Dr. Homan has engaged the ETG to reinstate the discussion on district-wide planning, vision, and strategy.

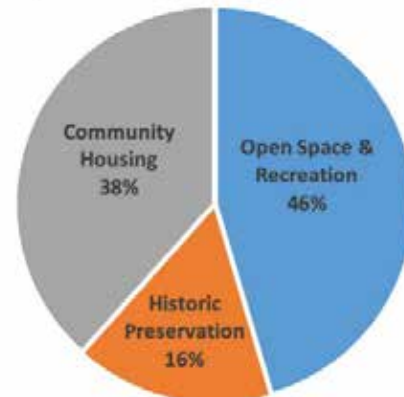
The ETG partnered with the district to develop a year-long planning, visioning, and strategy process that will engage a broad set of community stakeholders in the development of a renewed vision and strategy for the Arlington Public Schools. That process will include several community workshops to jointly author a vision and strategy for the school district, a plan to execute on the initiatives included in that strategy, and a governance process to ensure the realization of the strategy and vision.

The ETG drafted a grant application, refined by the district, presented to the Arlington Education Foundation, and funded to support the process.

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT COMMITTEE

Arlington began implementing the Community Preservation Act (CPA) in 2015. The CPA allows cities and towns to reserve dedicated funds to preserve open space and historic sites, create affordable community housing, and develop outdoor recreational facilities. CPA projects are financed by local revenues collected from a property tax surcharge (in Arlington, 1.5% of the net tax levy minus exemptions), plus annual distributions from the state CPA trust fund.

Expenditures by CPA Program Area



The Community Preservation Act Committee studies local community preservation needs, recommends CPA appropriations to Town Meeting, and oversees projects funded by CPA. In 2021 the Committee reviewed project applications for CPA funding in fiscal year 2022, hosted public applicant presentations, and successfully recommended ten projects to Town Meeting. The Committee consulted with the Select Board, Finance Committee, Capital Planning Committee, and other Town leaders in reaching our recommendations.

CPA Projects Funded for FY2022

Following the recommendation of the Committee, Town Meeting appropriated or reserved a total of \$2,847,054 in CPA funds for FY2022 to support local community housing, historic preservation, open space, and recreation:

- \$251,793 for Drake Village Cottages Renovation.
- \$27,228 for Leasing Differential for Arlington Tenants.
- \$100,000 to the Housing Corporation of Arlington (HCA) for Emergency Response Initiative, providing tenant assistance to those impacted by COVID.
- \$40,000 for North Beach Ramp at Spy Pond Park.
- \$1,493,026 for Hurd Field Renovation, Phase I.
- \$30,000 for Public Land Management Plan.
- \$490,883 for Spy Pond Playground.
- \$50,000 for Foot of the Rocks Study and Preliminary Design.
- \$249,625 for Historic Preservation of the Jason Russell House.
- \$55,000 for Old Schwamb Mill Envelope & Structural Engineering Report.

For more information, please visit arlingtonma.gov/communitypreservation

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

PERMANENT TOWN BUILDING COMMITTEE

The Permanent Town Building Committee (PTBC) was established by the 1969 Town Meeting to oversee the design and construction of new buildings and major renovations for Town of Arlington properties. The Committee is comprised of five registered voter members, appointed jointly by the chairs of the Select Board, Finance Committee, and School Committee, a representative of the School Committee and in addition the Town Manager, Superintendent of Schools, and Facilities Director or their designees.

Activities in 2021

The coronavirus pandemic continued to have an impact on construction projects at the local level and across the nation. Suppliers of basic raw materials such as steel, lumber, and insulation reduced production starting in the Spring of 2020, and this caused shortages and increased prices through 2021 as the supply chain for domestic and foreign-made materials struggled to recover. Further, shortages of labor from truck drivers to skilled tradespeople resulted in increased costs and delays in the face of a robust construction environment. Despite these challenges, the PTBC pressed forward in 2021 with two important projects for the Town because any pause or delays at this point would only mean increased costs and disruption of Town services for Arlington residents

Central School (renovation)

Architect:	Sterling Associates	
Owners Project Manager:	The Vertex	
Companies		
Construction Manager:	Kronenberger & Sons	
Restoration		
Project Budget		
Construction:	\$ 6,878,273	
Soft Costs*:	\$ 1,676,727	
Total:	\$ 8,555,000	
* soft costs include architecture, engineering, contingency, furniture, etc.		
Funding History		
Initial Design:	\$ 400,000	2017
Town Meeting Article 34 5/3/2017 205-1		
Additional Planning and Design:	\$ 100,000	2018
Town Meeting Article 30 4/25/2018 207-1-2		
Construction:	\$ 8,055,000	2019
Town Meeting Article 58 5/8/2019 198-14		
Total:	\$ 8,555,000	

The renovation of the lower floors of the Central School, which was built in 1894 as the Arlington High School and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, began in May 2020. The building is managed

by the Arlington Redevelopment Board. An earlier renovation of the 3rd and 4th floors, housing the Arlington Center for the Arts, was completed a few years earlier. The current renovation will serve the Council on Aging, Seniors Association, Department of Health and Human Services including Veteran's Services, and a wide variety of senior-oriented programs and services. The original schedule for the renovations was approximately twelve months, from May 2020 to May 2021, but for the reasons noted above, this schedule is now expected to extend into the early months of 2022.

During the initial phases of the renovations, many unforeseen latent conditions were uncovered, which resulted in a series of changes in design, materials used, and coordination with mechanical and structural elements of the project. In 2021 there were delays in portions of the project related to electrical utilities, the installation of the new elevator/lift, HVAC equipment, and pre-cast stone, among others. While these delays did impact the overall timeline for the completion of the project, they have not yet had a substantial impact on the estimated final cost of the project and are being monitored closely. The installation of large chimney caps, the replacement of select exterior soffits and downspouts, and the installation of new HVAC components were completed in the Summer and Fall of 2021.

As of the end of 2021 the second-floor offices have been completed, the large activity room on the first floor, as well as the art room, kitchen, bathrooms, and other support spaces, have also been mostly completed. The ground floor office and activity areas, including the game room and pool room, are expected to be completed by the end of January 2022, and will be occupied by Council on Aging staff shortly thereafter. The main entrance on Maple Street, with its new doorway and canopy, is expected to be completed in the February-April 2022 timeframe, along with the replacement of exterior stone and the installation of new East and West entry doors.

Following this renovation project, the Town may consider a future project to address the remaining areas of this historic building that need attention. In particular, the building envelope including windows and brickwork may need restoration, upgrades, or replacements. While these improvements are outside of the scope of the current project, they may be necessary to ensure that the building is energy efficient and structurally sound and will continue to serve the Town into the future.



New Wheelchair Lift connecting East entrance to ground and first floors.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



Maple Street entrance with canopy, installation in progress..



Academy Street entrance with new steps.



Library with electric fireplace on ground floor.



Community Room on first floor.

Department of Public Works / Town Yard

(renovation and new construction)

Architect: Weston & Sampson
Owner's Project Manager: Sydney Project Management

Construction Manager: Commodore Builders

Project Budget

Construction: \$ 37,420,480

Soft Costs: \$ 9,099,744

Total: \$ 46,520,224

* soft costs include architecture, engineering, contingency, furniture, etc.

Funding History

Initial Design: \$ 1,050,000 2016

Town Meeting Article 36 5/16/2016 193-4

Additional Planning and Design: \$ 1,253,754 2018

Special Town Meeting Article 7 12/5/2018 180-9

Construction: \$ 29,900,000 2019

Town Meeting Article 58 5/8/2019 198-14

Supplemental Funding 1: \$ 8,900,000 2020

Special Town Meeting Article 23 11/30/2020 237-9

Supplemental Funding 2: \$ 5,416,470 2021

Town Meeting Article 56 5/17/2021 228-7

Total: \$ 46,520,224

In the Winter of 2021 construction bids for the DPW / Town Yard project were opened and came in higher than expected. This situation was not foreseen in the Fall of 2020, when additional funds for this project were secured at the Special Town Meeting. Further, there had been hope that the local construction market would be depressed by the pandemic and competitive enough to yield some savings. However, as noted above, the pandemic did not dampen the pace of local construction. On the contrary, a booming construction environment in the greater Boston area increased competition for scarce materials and labor, resulting in increased costs.

Rather than maintain the construction portion of the budget at \$38.93 million by reducing the scope of the project, the PTBC determined that the Town should proceed with the full project scope contained in the original goals of the project (less a few reasonable value engineering reductions) and avoid additional disruptive and expensive construction activities that would be needed soon. This meant maintaining the "impact" scope items that had been identified by the architects as possible reductions in the project. By maintaining the interior and exterior work at Buildings C and D, which house the extensive and expensive DPW vehicle fleet, the Town can provide storage and maintenance space to help preserve these valuable assets. Further, by keeping the repair of the Mill Brook culvert within the scope of the project, the Town can address the continuing deterioration of the culvert and avoid expensive emergency repairs. Finally, the PTBC determined that a conservative contingency account should be estab-

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

lished for this project because the Town Yard rests on a known contaminated site, and that the renovations to historic buildings would likely uncover latent conditions that were not foreseen and need to be addressed.

After consulting with its consultants and the Capital Planning Committee, the PTBC requested an increase to the budget of \$5,416,470. The PTBC voted to support this increase in a unanimous vote on April 20, 2021. The increase was supported by the Capital Planning Committee with a unanimous vote on April 29, 2021, and the Finance Committee supported the request with a vote of 13-4 on May 5, 2021. Town Meeting supported the increase as part of the 2022 Capital Budget by a vote of 228-7 on May 17, 2021.

As of late 2021 the renovations to Building A (the "Arlington Gas Light Company" building on Grove Street) are well underway in anticipation of moving the Town's IT servers from the High School to this new permanent location. There were unforeseen latent conditions discovered in Building A, but these conditions were not extremely extensive, and the repairs have been covered by funds from the contingency account. There has been much site work completed, and a temporary salt shed has been constructed for the winter snow season. The delivery of the new Building E, a pre-engineered building that will be assembled on site, will likely be delayed due to the supply chain issues. The Construction Manager is shifting focus to other project tasks that can be completed while awaiting delivery of Building E so that the overall schedule of the project can be maintained.



Grove Street entrance to Building A



IT Server Room in Building.

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

In 2021 the Zoning Board of Appeals as prescribed in Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40A, The Zoning Act, and, also, as further clarified by the Town's Zoning Bylaw, heard and rendered decisions on thirty seven petitions. Since its inception in 1946 the Zoning Board of Appeals has heard and rendered decisions on over 3,300 appeals. Petitions heard by the Board include Variances, Special Permits, Appeals from the Decision of the Building Inspector, and Comprehensive Permits (Chapter 40B).

The Zoning Board of Appeals is comprised of five regular members: the Chair and four appointees and two associate members. For a decision to be granted, the vote of the five-member board must either carry a super majority or a simple majority, depending on the petition. All hearings are open to the public and are generally held on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month, as needed. The meetings are usually held in the conference room located on the second floor of the Town Hall Annex, but have been held remotely since March 2020. All hearings are advertised in The Arlington Advocate for two consecutive weeks and posted on the Town Clerk's Bulletin Board at least three weeks prior to the hearing date. Hearings are also posted on the Town website and abutters to the property are notified by mail. To receive ZBA Agendas by email, subscribe online at arlingtonma.gov/subscribe. The Rules and Regulations of the Zoning Board of Appeals are on file in the Office of the Town Clerk and in the Zoning Board of Appeals' Office at 23 Maple Street.

2021 Petitions Heard by ZBA

Petitions for Variance	4
Applications for Special Permits	30
Appeal of Building Inspector's Decision	2
Amendments to Special Permits/Variance	0
Comprehensive Permits	2 (1165R Mass Ave) (Thorndike Place)
Total Petitions Filed with Clerk	38
Total Continued Hearings	11
Total Petitions Withdrawn	1
Total Petitions sent to ARB	3

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



4 Winslow Street, Arlington, MA 02474 p: 781-646-3400 f: 781-646-0496

ARLINGTON HOUSING AUTHORITY

The Arlington Housing Authority (AHA) is proud of its distinction as the single largest provider of affordable housing in Arlington.

Our mission is to provide adequate, affordable and safe housing to low, very-low and extremely low-income families from the Town of Arlington and surrounding communities through collaborative partnerships with community agencies while managing Housing Authority finances in a fiscally responsible manner.

The Arlington Housing Authority manages 1,148 housing units and provides housing to over 1,700 residents and program participants. The AHA housing portfolio includes 520 units for the elderly and those with a disability under the age of 60 years old at Drake Village, Chestnut Manor, Cusack Terrace, Hauser Building, Mystic Gardens, and Winslow Towers; 179 units of family housing at Menotomy Manor, ten of which are handicapped accessible wheel chair units; the Donnelly House for 13 developmentally challenged residents; and 422 Housing Choice Vouchers that help participants live in privately-owned dwellings throughout the community.

The Arlington Housing Authority currently has four active tenant associations. The presidents of the Chestnut Manor, Cusack Terrace, Menotomy Manor, and Winslow Towers tenant associations hold monthly meetings with their residents in accordance with their bylaws. They also represent the residents of their developments at monthly meetings with AHA management. Through these meetings and others, tenant associations are able to advocate for their fellow residents in order that the AHA can better understand the needs of its resident population.

The Authority is a quasi-governmental agency created by Arlington's Town Meeting in 1948 that administers these programs sponsored by the State or Federal government. Properties owned by the Authority are exempt from local property taxes, yet the Authority annually pays the maximum payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) as allowed by state statute.

Board of Commissioners

The Board of Commissioners of the Authority is the policy making body of the agency. There are five members of the Arlington Housing Authority's Board of Commissioners. The Executive Director, John "Jack"

Nagle is appointed by the Board of Commissioners and manages the day-to-day operations of the Authority.

Year in Review

2021 was another difficult year in which great progress was made in combatting the COVID-19 virus. However, new strains have led to the reimplementation of restrictions and precautionary measures. Through continued collaboration with the Town of Arlington, the AHA has been able to take measures to ensure resident, staff, and public safety.

The AHA is grateful for its partnerships with outside agencies in providing vaccine clinics and other resources on site for residents and staff. We are especially grateful to Arlington Health and Human Services (H&HS) for conducting a COVID-19 vaccination clinic for residents and staff in the spring of 2021 and Keyes Drug for providing a COVID-19 booster clinic in December of 2021. Other important efforts that positively impacted our residents were food delivery services coordinated by Arlington EATs, Food Link, and H&HS as well as continued care services coordinated through Minuteman Senior Services.

In addition to the challenges associated with COVID-19, there have been personnel changes like the retirement of John Griffin and Bob Cronin, constantly evolving policies and procedures from the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), funding opportunities, and increased public interest. Through these opportunities and challenges, the AHA has been able to build on and identify areas in which it will be able to better serve its residents and program participants.

During 2021 the Authority began, and completed, a number of capital improvement projects that are essential in the preservation of the Authority's public housing portfolio.

Cusack Terrace, 67 Units 8 Summer Street

The replacement of the buildings ballasted membrane roof was completed. The phone intercom system was upgraded to ensure better access and ensure security for residents.

Winslow Towers, 132 Units 4 Winslow Street

Projects that were completed include repairs to the building façade, the replacement of all outer windows, and the replacement of the side doors in the community room. Projects that are currently under construction include the upgrade of the fire pump sprinkler, the common area bathrooms upgrade to meet ADA compliance, and the air conditioning project for the community room and office.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



Chestnut Manor, 100 Units 54 Medford Street

The balcony resurfacing project was completed this year. The common area bathroom upgrade to meet ADA compliance is currently under construction.

Drake Village, 72 Units and the Hauser Building, 144 Units, 37 Drake Road

The AHA completed the exterior renovations to the cottages as well as the upgrade of its key FOB entry system at the Hauser Building. There are projects currently planned to; replace the entry way doors at the Cottages, upgrade the fire alarm system in the Hauser Building and the Cottages and replace the Hauser Building roof. Additionally, the AHA is in the design phase of the creative placemaking project. This project will improve the exterior grounds and provide additional active spaces for our residents. It will also fit in well with the projects being completed at Arlington Reservoir and Hurd Field.

Menotomy Manor, 179 Units Freemont Court

AHA is currently in the process of obtaining funding to replace the windows at Menotomy Manor. American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) funding through the Town, as well as potential funding through other state and local sources, will play a major role in the AHA's ability to replace these windows. Additionally, AHA is currently in the process of completing a Window Study in order that it can effectively plan, prioritize, and best describe its needs to outside agencies. The AHA is also seeking out options to increase energy efficiencies so Menotomy Manor can become more sustainable to climate change. A flood survey was recently started by DHCD to help identify Menotomy Manor's needs.

998 Mass. Ave. Special Needs Housing

Future projects include interior renovations to include new bathrooms and kitchen, and the installation of a new egress door.

Community Partnerships

The AHA continues to seek out and build upon our partnerships with community service program providers.



Minuteman Senior Services has been very successful at our Drake Village location by providing services to our seniors on site and at our other developments as well as administering the meals on wheels program out of the Hauser Building kitchen. Through the continued efforts made by Minuteman Senior Services and its vendors, the quality of life for our residents has improved.

The partnership between the AHA and the Arlington Police Department has continued to have a positive effect on the residents and neighbors of Menotomy Manor. The AHA has seen significant decreases in crime and expanded services to the area.

Arlington Health's Department and Council on Aging provide essential supports to our residents in a normal year. Throughout COVID-19 they have been critical in ensuring our residents have sufficient resources, access to the flu vaccine, and other medical resources like testing kits. We are grateful to these agencies as well as Keyes Drug for their partnership in the COVID-19 vaccine and booster clinics. Their support was vital in these extremely important efforts.

After a year in which most programs were put on hold, we were excited to bring back the following programs as well as add some new ones.

The Community Work Program (CWP) sponsored by the Middlesex Sheriff's Office. Under the supervision of correctional personnel, inmates assisted the AHA maintenance staff in its spring and fall cleanup efforts as in other projects that benefit residents and improve building aesthetics.

The Fidelity House includes afternoon programs in our Menotomy Manor Development that provides transportation for children, as well as free memberships and financial assistance to make summer programs more attainable for families and their children. This program has been extremely successful, with many residents participating.

The award-winning evening program, Operation Success, has been a major factor in improving student grades by providing homework help and guidance for

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

the residents of Menotomy Manor. Janet Maguire and Peggy Regan run this program with a large group of young volunteers.

The Kids LAHF program at Menotomy Manor will be starting its inaugural programs at Menotomy Manor. These programs, run by Darryl Bullock, will cater to children grades K – 5 helping them improving reading skills and encourage healthy eating. This program was made possible through funding by Arlington EATs.

The Lamplight Women's Literacy Center will be providing English classes at Menotomy Manor starting the end of January 2022. This program run by Lisa Chiulli Lay from Lamplight Women's Literacy Center, will provide adult residents at Menotomy Manor the opportunity to attend beginner and intermediate English classes.

The Arlington Housing Authority Board would like to thank all our partners for their hard work, and we look forward to many new and exciting ideas being put into action in the coming year.

Challenges Ahead

A continuing challenge for the AHA and state-aided public housing industry is the demand and need of funding for capital improvements and day to day operations. While the AHA applies for all funding opportunities available, and utilizes 100% of the funds received, there is still a great deficit in the funding needed to ensure optimal quality of life for our residents.

DHCD provided the AHA with \$906,131 in its annual Formula Funding for 2021. Formula Funding is provided to fund capital improvements at Local Housing Authorities. In 2021 the AHA spent over \$1,400,000 for capital improvement projects. To address gaps in funding needs, the AHA routinely applies for funding through outside sources including but not limited to CPA, CDBG, and other special funding sources through DHCD.

The majority of the AHA's operating budget comes from the rent receipts generated from family and senior public housing tenants. These funds are used to fund staff positions, expenses associated with office and maintenance operations as well as extraordinary expenses which fund the replacement of vehicles, machinery, tools, and other items essential to AHA operations. The average monthly rent and state subsidy for our largest types of public housing, Ch. 200 (Menotomy Manor) and Ch. 667 (Chestnut Manor, Cusack Terrace, Drake Village, Mystic Gardens, and Winslow Towers), are as follows:

Ch. 200 Family Housing (179 Units)	
2021 Average Monthly Rent Per Household	State Subsidy
\$648.61	\$30.87 per month/per household

Ch. 667 Elderly & Non-Elderly Disabled Housing (520 Units)

2021 Average Monthly Rent Per Household	State Subsidy
\$434.51	\$12.50 per month/per household

Administrative Services

The Authority continues to be a member of the centralized waitlist, which has now changed location to www.affordablehousing.com. The list is open to all prospective applicants daily. Arlington residents are given a preference.

The AHA's website, www.arlingtonhousing.org, provides valuable information to those wishing to learn more about the AHA and its programs. Applications for housing can be completed through online links, downloaded from our website or picked up at the main office.

Wait Lists

Through DHCD's state-aided public housing waiting list, Common Housing Application for Massachusetts Public-Housing (CHAMP), applicants can submit and self-manage their applications and upload other necessary documents through the CHAMP on-line portal from a computer, smartphone, or tablet and apply for available public housing across the Commonwealth.

The current number of applicants on each of our program waitlists are as follows.

Stated-Aided Elderly/Handicap One Bedroom Units
Total: 4,791 applicants (of those, 58 claim to live or work in Arlington)

State-Aided Family 2-Bedroom Units
Total: 7,620 applicants (of those, 28 claim to live or work in Arlington)

State-Aided Family 3-Bedroom Units
Total: 3,430 applicants (of those, 11 claim to live or work in Arlington)

Section 8 Wait List
Arlington Applicants: *403

**Because Arlington is on a centralized wait list, the Section 8 wait list is extremely long; therefore, only Arlington residents and those employed in Arlington are listed for this program.*

Acknowledgments

The Arlington Housing Authority would like to thank all its employees for their dedication throughout the year.